

The Federal Flyer

FY 2004 Transportation Appropriations Bills Move Closer to Enactment After Much Debate, Congress Proposes Improved Funding for TEA 21 Programs

With only two weeks left in the current federal fiscal year, the 108th Congress must complete the 14 annual appropriations bills for the federal fiscal year beginning October 1, 2003. It looks like they will miss that deadline, resulting in most of the federal programs (including transportation) possibly being funded through at least one continuing resolution until the final bills are enacted.

One of those spending bills that has received attention lately is the FY 2004 transportation and treasury appropriations act. The House Appropriations Committee completed its work on the measure (H.R. 2989) in late July, before the annual August recess. The full House took up consideration of the bill the first week of September. H.R. 2989 came to the House floor with a few controversial provisions and a long list of proposed amendments. Most of the amendments were unsuccessful, including a handful that attempted to reduce Amtrak funding below the bill's \$900 million level. One of the few successful amendments was introduced by **House Highways and Transit Subcommittee Chairman Thomas Petri** (R - Wisconsin). The Petri amendment (approved by a record vote of 327-90) struck language in the bill that would have made optional the 10% STP set-aside for transportation enhancement activities. After much debate on this and other funding policy questions, the full House finally voted 381-39 on September 9, 2003 to approve the bill as amended and send it to the Senate.

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Senate Appropriations Committee Gives Swift Consideration to S. 1589. At the same time as the full House was debating its version of the FY 2004 transportation spending bill, the Senate Appropriations Committee was meeting to approve S. 1589. The Senate bill provides \$33.843 billion for the federal highway programs, \$3.4 billion for the Airport Improvement Program, \$190 million for the Motor Carrier Safety Program, \$47 million for the construction of truck safety inspection stations along the U.S.-Mexico border, \$225 million for highway traffic safety grants, \$1.57 billion for the Federal Railroad Administration (including a controversial \$1.346 billion in Amtrak funding), and \$7.3 billion for the Federal Transit Administration's programs. The Senate Appropriations Committee passed S. 1589 by voice vote on September 4, 2003.

Now that H.R. 2989 is in the Senate, the next step is full Senate consideration of the Senate substitute for H.R. 2989 (the text of S. 1589). Then, the two houses will appoint a conference committee to settle the differences between the two versions of the bill.

See pages 2 and 3 for a list of the Texas project earmarks in both bills.

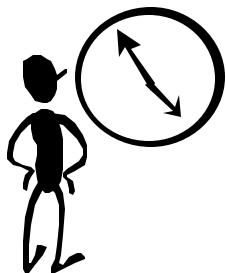
FY 2004 Appropriations Earmarks for Texas — House Vs. Senate Committee Bills

Highway Discretionary Project Earmarks		
ITS Deployment	House	Senate
Houston, TX ITS	\$1,700,00	
Integration and Implementation of DYNASMART-X, RHODES, and CLAIRE in Houston	\$500,000	
ITS Technologies San Antonio	\$320,000	
Laredo Signal Integration Project	\$1,750,000	
Multi-Region ATIS for the IH-20 Corridor - Phase 1	\$1,000,000	
Regional ITS Architecture & Deployment Plan for Eagle Pass Region and Integrate with Laredo	\$300,000	
Rural Freeway Management System Implementation for the IG-20 Corridor in the Tyler Region	\$300,000	
Medical Center Early Warning Transportation System		\$2,000,000
Statewide ITS Deployment and Integration		\$1,000,000
Interstate Maintenance	House	Senate
I-35 East/I-635 Interchange	\$800,000	
IH 30 from FM 989 to US 59/71 in Texarkana	\$3,000,000	
IH 30 Interchange Improvement Project	\$2,000,000	
IH35/SH45 Interchange at Round Rock	\$250,000	
Right of Way Project on IH 35, from FM 2063 in Hewitt to South Loop 340/SH 6 Interchange	\$1,500,000	
Widening Interstate 35 East between FM 2181 and Lake Lewisville	\$250,000	
Kelly USA: New Luke Road		\$200,000
IH-35		\$5,800,000
Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation	House	Senate
I-35 Trinity River Bridge	\$1,000,000	
SH 332 at Brazos River, Brazoria County	\$6,000,000	
IH-35 Chambers Creek Bridges		\$1,500,000
Federal Lands Highways	House	Senate
IH-20 - Dyess AFB Access	\$2,500,000	
Tank Destroyer Blvd., Fort Hood	\$2,000,000	
National Corridor Planning and Border Infrastructure Programs	House	Senate
Donna-Rio Bravo International Border Crossing	\$750,000	
Freight Rail Transportation Corridor and Urban Mobility Program—Harris County	\$1,000,000	
Loop 201 Expansion Project	\$750,000	
Loop 304 Expansion and Improvement, Crockett	\$500,000	
Ports to Plains highway rehabilitation between Del Rio and Eagle Pass	\$1,000,000	
SH 158 widening in Sterling County	\$1,000,000	
US 83 Anzalduas Connection Road and Structures to New International Bridge	\$500,000	
West Laredo Multimodal Trade Corridor	\$2,000,000	
I-69		\$5,800,000
US 87 Bypass around Big Spring		\$200,000
Ferry Boats and Ferry Terminal Facilities	House	Senate
Passenger Ferry, Port of Corpus Christi	\$500,000	
Transportation and Community System Preservation Pilot Program	House	Senate
FM 66 Ellis County from IH-35 in Waxahachie to FM 157 at Maypearl	\$750,000	
Houston-Galveston Regional Congestion Study	\$750,000	
Trinity River Visions Neighborhood Linkage	\$500,000	
Galveston Railroad Bridge Replacement		\$500,000
Surface Transportation Projects	House	Senate
City of Fort Worth Corridor Redevelopment Program	\$1,200,000	
San Antonio Economic Development Spur	\$3,000,000	
Copperas Cove Reliever Route	\$1,000,000	
I-69 Texas	\$7,000,000	
Reflective Crack Relief Interlayer, US 59	\$3,000,000	
South Orient economic rehabilitation project	\$1,000,000	
Houston Main Street Corridor Revitalization Project	\$400,000	
Houston Greater Partnership Quality of Life Initiative		\$500,000
Texas Highway Discretionary Totals	\$51,770,000	\$17,500,000

Transit Discretionary Project Earmarks		
Buses and Bus Facilities	House	Senate
Texas Bus Replacement Program, Brazos County	\$1,000,000	
Capitol Metro Hybrid Electric Buses	\$500,000	\$4,000,000
Capitol Metro North Operating Facility	\$1,250,000	
TX Sun Metro -Bus Replacement Program	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000
Grapevine, TX Bus Purchase	\$325,000	
Citibuses (Lubbock)	\$1,250,000	\$1,750,000
Intermodal Transit Terminal/Parking Facility, Lufkin	\$1,000,000	
Vehicle Replacement, Nacogdoches	\$1,000,000	
Bus Facility Project, Waco	\$1,500,000	
CityLink Van and Technology Replacement (Abilene)	\$700,000	
Bus and Bus Facilities, Corpus Christi	\$800,000	
Ft. Worth Transportation Authority Fleet Modernization and Bus Transfer Centers	\$4,000,000	
Galveston Maintenance Facility Renovations	\$800,000	
Intermodal Center, Hopkins County	\$750,000	
Hunt County Committee on Aging Transportation Facility	\$750,000	
Bus Facility, Laredo	\$1,750,000	
North Side Transfer Center Brownsville Urban System (BUS)	\$500,000	
Tyler/Longview Public Transportation Management	\$500,000	
VIA Metropolitan Transit Authority-New Buses and Bus Facility Modernization (San Antonio)	\$1,000,000	\$6,000,000
South East Texas Transit Facility Improvements and Bus Replacements	\$250,000	
The District-Bryan Intermodal Transit Terminal/Parking & Pedestrian Improvements	\$1,250,000	
The Woodlands Park and Ride Expansion	\$800,000	
Denton Downtown Multimodal Transportation Facility		\$1,000,000
New Starts	House	Senate
North Central Light Rail Extension	\$30,161,283	\$30,161,283
Houston-Advanced Metro Transit Plan		\$10,000,000
Job Access and Reverse Commute Grants	House	Senate
Job Access Program, El Paso	\$200,000	\$750,000
CitiBus/JARC (Lubbock)	\$230,000	\$230,000
CityLink Public Transportation Services	\$100,000	
Job Access and Reverse Commute, Corpus Christi	\$375,000	\$500,000
Galveston Job Access Reverse Commute Program	\$450,000	\$500,000
Metropolitan Transit Authority-Job Access Program, San Antonio	\$400,000	\$1,000,000
South East Texas Transit Facility Improvements and Bus Replacements	\$150,000	
Texas Colonias JARC Initiative	\$2,400,000	\$2,000,000
Ways to Work, Tarrant County		\$500,000
Aviation Earmarks		
Terminal air traffic control facilities replacement, Abilene	\$1,760,000	\$1,760,000
Terminal air traffic control facilities replacement , Dallas		\$2,005,000
Terminal air traffic control facilities replacement, Brownsville		\$299,450
Terminal air traffic control facilities replacement, DFW Airport		\$528,810
Discretionary Grants	House	Senate
A.L. Mangham, Jr. Regional - Improving and widening Runway 18-36; planning for installation of MALSR	Recommended	Recommended
Denton Municipal Airport - Various improvements	Recommended	Recommended
Galveston Scholes Int. - Reconstruction of taxiways and associated aprons; rehabilitation of runways	Recommended	
Abilene Regional Airport - Aviation ramp reconstruction; runway lighting repair; terminal renovation; and taxiway extension	Recommended	Recommended
McKinney Municipal Airport -Repair of runway and taxiway	Recommended	Recommended
Killeen/Ft. Hood Joint Use Airport - Safety improvements	Recommended	
Sugarland Regional Airport - Construct apron and taxiway	Recommended	Recommended
Easterwood Field-Approach Surveillance Radar		Recommended
Addison Airport-Runway Safety Area Improvements		Recommended

Congress Considers Short-Term TEA 21 Extension

Bill Would Authorize, Fund Programs for 5 Months



With the clock ticking down to the September 30, 2003 expiration of TEA 21 authorizations for federal highways, highway safety, transit, and motor carrier safety programs and little progress made toward agreement on ways to finance a larger program in a long-term reauthorization bill, House and Senate leaders have agreed to introduce a 5-month extension of TEA 21 authorization and funding. This short-term extension would provide funding and programming authority (based on the FY 2004 budget allocations) until March 1, 2004, giving the authorizing and financing committees more time to find the funding solutions they seek.

The extension bill is being marked up in the Senate Finance, Environment and Public Works, and Banking Committees this week. Once the Senate completes its work on the measure, the House Transportation and Infrastructure and Ways and Means Committees will work to quickly wrap up the bill before the September 30th deadline. A key motivator for this effort is language in Title 23 (as amended by TEA 21) that would prevent the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) from processing any project approval documents without new operating authority and funding. The extension bill would give FHWA a full year's of operating authority, even though the bill itself would only provide 5 months of additional contract authority for projects.

Senate Finance Committee to Include Ethanol Exemption Relief Language. The leaders of the Senate Finance Committee have been working to fix a funding problem affecting the Highway Account of the Highway Trust Fund. They have developed a general agreement in Congress to eliminate the current exemption from full taxation of motor fuels containing ethanol while still providing ethanol fuel producers a tax benefit. The solution they have developed is proposed as part of H.R. 6, the comprehensive energy bill now in conference committee. That language (to eliminate the fuels tax exemption) is paired with language in S. 1548 that would replace the fuels tax subsidy with a new tax credit for producers who blend gasoline with ethanol. Since there is general agreement on this proposal, **Finance Committee Chairman Charles Grassley** (R - Iowa) and **Ranking Member Max Baucus** (D - Montana) plan to include these provisions in the short-term extension at the same time that they provide continuing authorization for the underlying fuels taxes that support the Highway Trust Fund. If the provision is enacted, an estimated \$2 billion a year in additional funds would begin flowing into the Highway Account of the Highway Trust Fund and provide part of the new revenue growth needed to enact a larger highway and transit program in the TEA 21 reauthorization. However, it is uncertain if the Ways and Means Committee will agree to this proposal. Stay tuned.

The *Federal Flyer* is a publication of the TxDOT Legislative Affairs Office. It is intended to provide up-to-date information on major legislative activities in the 108th Congress for the management of the Texas Department of Transportation, state leaders, and others interested in Texas transportation issues. This report will also feature key activities in the national transportation community. Sources include news services and staff reports.

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